



Moving Beyond Your Limitations

Redesign Your Walk

By Bonnie Kissam, M.A., Feldenkrais® Practitioner

BODY MIND MAPS

Each of us has created our own unique walking pattern, just like we have our own unique handwriting pattern. These patterns come from maps in your mind and “These maps are dynamic: They grow, shrink, and morph to suit your needs,” states Sandra and Mathew Blakeslee in *The Body Has a Mind of Its Own*. You are the architect of your “body map.”

Over the years our balance and postural patterns are impacted by accidents, operations, illnesses, stresses, old habits, and the inevitable aging process. Aches and pains lead us to form new movement patterns (body maps) as a way to compensate for the loss of our natural dexterity.

The repetition of these patterns can cause problems. Repetitive motion syndrome is often associated with wrists and computers. However, this also applies to your pattern of walking. Overuse, overtime, with a less than optimal walking pattern, can lead to problems in your neck, back, hips, knees and feet.

GOOD NEWS

As the architect, you can go back to the drawing board. **You can redesign your alignment, balance, and coordination so that walking requires less effort and is more comfortable.** The brain has the plasticity to shift the movement patterns. Bonnie Kissam, the Better Balance Coach, teaches a process that helps you do the redesigning through awareness, attention, and new experiences.

EASY DOES IT

The *Feldenkrais® Method* is a protocol that encourages a conversation between YOUR mind and YOUR body. Bonnie Kissam, a certified *Feldenkrais® Practitioner*, gently guides you in a way that stimulates your brain to become consciously aware of the unconscious movement patterns. Bonnie often calls her classes a laboratory, where you learn to listen and discover variations on patterns of action to prevent repetitive motion stresses.

LAB LESSONS

In the laboratory, Bonnie teaches the *Awareness Through Movement®* lessons which provide the time and attention necessary to activate the mind/body reconnection. The format of the lessons takes you out of your walk (out of gravity), and has you sit in a chair or lie on the floor to help you discover new movement possibilities from within yourself. By re-developing your movement imagery, you can transfer the images into your daily walking. The verbal and non-verbal dialogue between the body and mind can help to re-coordinate daily movement activities into optimal action.

Bonnie Kissam, certified *Feldenkrais*® Practitioner, is located at Ionie's, 1241 Fruitville Road, Sarasota. She offers group weekly classes using *Awareness through Movement*® lessons. Individual sessions using *Functional Integration*® lessons are also available. For more information, visit www.bonniekissam.com or call 941-360.2248 or 1.800.245.5123.